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SUBJECT: FRANCE "CAUTIOUS" ON EU-LED BMO MISSION, RECEIVE
RUSSIAN PROPOSAL ON TRANSNISTRIA

REF: PARIS 1178

Classified By: POLITICAL MINISTER-COUNSELOR JOSIAH ROSENBLATT, FOR REAS
ONS 1.4 B/D

1. (C) Pierre Cochard, DAS-equivalent for Russia and the former Soviet states, told Poloff March 10 that France was not firmly opposed to a EU-led BMO in Georgia, but that it was being "cautious" based on the swirl of other options available and ESDP funding constraints. Cochard bemoaned the lack of a unified front with the Russians regarding the BMO; he thought it still possible that Russia could be convinced to acquiesce to an OSCE monitoring and training mission along the Georgian border with Russia. He said the EU was discussing three options: 1) a modest reinforcement of the EU Mission in Georgia; 2) a full-fledged EU monitoring mission; and 3) a combined EU monitoring and training mission. The EU, said Cochard, would probably decide on the first option as an interim measure, and later, if necessary, it would consider the second and third options. He reiterated that France, despite reports to the contrary, was not categorically opposed to the second option if circumstances warranted such a decision.

2. (C) Cochard raised reftel demarche on a Russian proposal for bilateral dialogue on Transnistria, saying that the MFA had recently received the expected Russian demarche. The Russians cited the Kozak Plan, said Cochard, which he did not believe they had raised when delivering a similar demarche in Washington. As reported in reftel, Cochard said the MFA would accept the Russian offer, believing it would be difficult to reject such a proposal for dialogue. French goals for these bilateral consultations would be to convince the Russians to accept an expanded seven-party dialogue, to include the EU and the U.S, said Cochard.
Leach